

Message Text

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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 1720

STATE FOR CU/ARTS, CU/EE, EUR/SOV; LENINGRAD FOR P&C;
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, UR

SUBJ: CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS: (CU/ARTS): ROY CLARK SHOW

USSR TOUR -- JANUARY 18 - FEBRUARY 3, 1976

REF: STATE 026960, MOSCOW 0815; 75 MOSCOW 18295, MOSCOW 1609,
USINFOS OF JAN. 21, 22,23, 25, 26, FEBRUARY 2

1. SUMMARY: THE ROY CLARK SHOW OVERCAME THE LANGUAGE BARRIER AND LATE DELIVERY OF EQUIPMENT TO COMPLETE A SUCCESSFUL TOUR OF THE SOVIET UNION (JANUARY EIGHTEEN - FEBRUARY THREE, 1976). PRAVDA AND IZVESTIA HAILED THE SHOW AND IT RECEIVED RADIO AND TV COVERAGE. MEMBERS OF THE SHOW ENTHUSIASTICALLY PARTICIPATED IN OFF-STAGE ACTIVITIES, DEVELOPING CLOSE CONTACTS WITH SOVIET MUSICIANS. THE GROUP'S HIGH PROFESSIONALISM, WARM MANNER AND BROAD REPERTOIRE OF AMERICAN COUNTRY MUSIC IMPRESSED THEIR AUDIENCES WITH THE WIDE CREATIVE RANGE OF THIS GENRE AND THESE MUSICIANS AND SINGERS. END SUMMARY.

2. PERFORMANCES: ALL SHOWS WERE SRO FOR TOTAL AUDIENCE SIZE OF OVER 62,000. CLARK'S STYLE OF INSTRUMENTAL
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AND VOCAL MUSIC AND HUMOR NOT COMPLETELY COMPREHENDED BY

AUDIENCE UNTIL GOSKONTSERT CONTRACT INTERPRETER ALEXANDER PUCHKIN BROUGHT ON-STAGE TO INTERPRET CLARK'S REMARKS. SHOW WAS FURTHER RESTRUCTURED AFTER FIRST PERFORMANCE TO CATER TO AUDIENCE PREFERENCES. GOSKONTSERT "CENSOR" WHO ARRIVED UNANNOUNCED IN RIGA OBJECTED TO "LARA'S THEME" FROM "DR. ZHIVAGO" WHICH WAS TO HAVE APPEARED IN SHOW AS EXPANDED BRIDGE AND IT WAS REMOVED. AUDIENCES BECAME WARMER AS GROUP DEVELOPED SHOW. EMBOFFS RECEIVED MANY ENTHUSIASTIC COMMENTS ON QUALITY OF PERFORMERS AND POSITIVE VALUE OF COUNTRY MUSIC. ALL FIVE PERFORMANCES IN MOSCOW WERE VERY SUCCESSFUL. HOWEVER, IMPORTANT THAT GROUPS COMING IN FUTURE ADEQUATELY AWARE OF LANGUAGE BARRIER AND STRUCTURE PROGRAMS ACCORDINGLY.

3. OFF-STAGE ACTIVITIES:

A. IN RIGA, A CALL WAS MADE AT THE CONSERVATORY WHERE THE GROUP HEARD LOCAL STUDENTS PERFORM AND PERFORMED FOR THEM IN RETURN. LATER THE GROUP WENT TO THE "HOUSE OF KNOWLEDGE" WHERE GROUP PERFORMED FOR ABOUT 200 DANCING PARTY AND CITY OFFICIALS.

B. GROUP MADE A CALL ON COMPOSERS UNION IN LENINGRAD AND HEARD RADIO AND TV FOLK MUSIC ENSEMBLE WHERE ANCIENT AND MODERN WORKS WERE PLAYED AND THE GROUP RESPONDED IN KIND BY PLAYING FOR THEIR SOVIET HOSTS. A RECEPTION IN HONOR OF THE GROUP GIVEN BY CONGEN PROVIDED FURTHER OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH COMPOSERS, MUSICIANS, PROMINENT LENINGRADERS.

C. AMBASSADOR'S LUNCHEON RECEPTION ON DAY OF MOSCOW ARRIVAL PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH LOCAL PRESS, TV, RADIO PEOPLE AS WELL AS MUSICIANS, MUSICOLOGISTS AND COMPOSERS. IN AFTER-DINNER RECEPTION AT HOUSE OF CAO, GROUP HEARD LOCAL FOLK MUSICIANS PERFORM, PLAYED FOR THEM AND SOVIET MUSIC WRITERS, AND EXCHANGED MUSICAL IDEAS. JANUARY THIRTY AFTERNOON PUBLIC PROGRAM AT FRIENDSHIP HOUSE SAW EXCHANGE OF GIFTS BETWEEN CLARK AND GENERAL SECRETARY OF FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY AND GENERAL SECRETARY OF COMPOSERS UNION FOLLOWED BY PERFORMANCES BY LOCAL FOLK MUSICIANS AND THE CLARK
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GROUP. THE GROUP WAS ENTHUSIASTIC AND EFFECTIVE IN OFF-STAGE ACTIVITIES AND SOVIETS WERE MUCH TAKEN WITH THEIR HIGH PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE, INNOVATIVE MUSICIANSHIP, SINCERE AND RELAXED "AMERICAN" MANNER, AND WARM EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO THEIR AUDIENCES.

4. TV, RADIO:

A. TV COVERAGE BEGAN BEFORE GROUP'S ARRIVAL WITH TWO BROADCASTS ON JANUARY ELEVEN PROMOTING GROUP WITH PHOTO STILLS AND MUSCI SUPPLIE BY EMB. WHILE IN LENINGRAD, GROUP CONTACTED BY DIRECTOR OF ONGOING NATIONAL TV VARIETY SHOW AND ASKED TO DO TWENTY-FIVE MINUTE SEGMENT FOR SHOW IN TV STUDIO WHILE IN MOSCOW. FOLLOWING STUDIO WORK, AFTERNOON OF JANUARY THIRTY-ONE, GROUP WAS PAID IN RUBLES FOR THEIR WORK (ALTHOUGH THIS HAD NOT BEE REQUESTED). NATIONAL TV NEWS COVERED PERFORMANCES IN MOSCOW AND DID INTERVIEWS WITH CLARK. FAILURE TO VIDEOTAPE FULL CONCERT AS RESULT OF GOSKONTSERT PRICE INCREASE COVERED IN SEPTEL.

B. EXTENSIVE RADIO COVERAGE OF TOUR ALSO BEGAN BEFORE GROUP'S ARRIVAL WITH RECORDS AND PUBLICITY MATERIAL SUPPLIED BY EMB. IN RIGA THREE INTERVIEWS WERE DONE WITH CLARK, AND NONGEN SUPPLIED MATERIAL TO ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENT, AND IN MOSCOW ALONE FIVE INTERVIEWS WITH CLARK WERE TAKEN FOR BROADCAST.

5. PRESS: PRESS COVERAGE WAS EXTENSIVE AND WARM. ADVANCE COVERAGE WAS IN RIGA'S SOVETSKAYA MOLODYOZH AND IN MOSCOW CLARK OPENING NOTED IN JANUARY THIRTY-ONE IZVESTIA ARTICLE OF FIVE-COLUMN INCHES. (WRITER WAS GUEST AT AMBASSADOR'S RECEPTION OF CLARK SHOW AND WAS GIVEN ACCESS FOR ADDITONAL INTERVIEW.) FEBRUARY THREE PRAVDA ARTICLE ON BACK PAGE FOUR COLUMNS BY EIGHT INCHES WITH PICTURE SIGNIFIES OFFICIAL APPROVAL OF AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF AMERICAN COUNTRY MUSIC IN GENERAL AND ROY CLARK IN PARTICULAR. ADDITIONAL ARTICLES ARE PROMISED IN NUMEROUS OTHER PAPERS AND JOURNALS BY REPORTERS WHO WERE PROVIDED EMBASSY MATERIALS AND INTRODUCED TO CLARK.
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6. TRANSPORTATION:

A. INTERNATIONAL -- FOR THE SECOND TIME IN ROW, PAN AM'S FAILURE TO SHIP PROPERTIES ENDANGERED PAG OPENING (REFTELS). AS RESULT, GROUP FORCED TO PREMIERE WITH INSUFFICIENT EQUIPMENT, RESULTING IN RESORTING TO OVEREXTEND TWO AVAILABLE SPEAKERS WHICH BLEW OUT DURING SHOW. CLARK SAID MORAL IF NOT LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY THIS LOSS AS WELL AS NUMEROUS ADDITIONAL MAN-HOURS REQUIRED BY DEPT, EMB, GROUP AND GOSKONTSERT TO ACCOMPLISH DELIVERY LIES WITH PAN AM--AND HE INTENDS TO DISCUSS ISSUE ON "TONIGH SHOW" NATIONWIDE TV PROGRAM UPON HIS RETURN TO US. EMB REQUESTS STRONG DEPT. PROTEST TO PAN AM AND PURSUIT OF ADEQUATE GUARANTEES TO INSURE THIS IS

LAST SUCH CASE.

B. INTERNAL--INTERNAL TRANSPORT WAS BY OVERNIGHT
TRAIN FROM MOSCOW TO RIGA, RIGA TO LENINGRAD AND

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ACTION CU-04

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E.O. 11652: N/A

LENINGRAD TO MOSCOW. ALL MOVEMENTS WERE ON SCHEDULE
WITH MINIMUM OF DIFFICULTY AS COMPARED AIR TRANSPORT
PROBLEMS OF ST. PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (REFTEL),
CONFIRMING SUPERIORITY TRAINS DURING FALL/WINTER
PERIOD AND SUGGESTING FALL/WINTER TOURS BE PLANNED
ALONG AVAILABLE RR ROUTES. GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE, HOWEVER,
IS LIMITED BY TRAIN TRANSPORT.

7. HOTELS:

A. THE DAUJAVA IN RIGA PROVED LESS SATISFACTORY
THAN ORIGINALLY AGREED UPON "RIGA". REMOTE LOCATION
COMBINED WITH DIRINESS WERE GROUP COMPLAINTS.
GOSKONTSERT SAID CHANGE TO DAUJAVA NECESSITATED BY
LATVIAN PARTY CONGRESS HELD SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH GROUP'S
STAY.

B. EUROPA IN LENINGRAD FAR SUPERIOR TO ORIGINALLY
AGREED UPON SOVETSKAYA.

C. ROSSIYA IN MOSCOW WAS CONVENIENT TO HALL AND COMFORTABLE.

8. HALLS:
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A. MANEGE IN RIGA, WHILE OLDEST AND POOREST EQUIPPED OF HALLS, PROVIDED MOST IMAGINATIVE LIGHTING FOR SHOW. HALL'S STAFF PROVED COOPERATIVE IN OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES IMPOSED BY PAN AM NON-DELIVERY, AND SOUND OF SHOW WAS ADEQUATE FOLLOWING PREMIERE. MANAGEMENT SQUEEZED ADDITIONAL FIVE HUNDRED SEATS INTO HALL FOUR FOUR THOUSAND SOLD-OUT PLACES/PERFORMANCE.

B. YUBELENIYA IN LENINGRAD CITED BY GROUP FOR EXTRAORDINARY COOPERATION IN HELPING GROUP SET-UP AND IMPROVE STAGING. DIFFICULTIES OF PERFORMING IN THE ROUND ON COLD STAGE IN MIDDLE OF ICE RINK BALANCED BY EXCELLENT SOUND SYSTEM AND HALL'S REBUILDING OF STAGE AFTER FIRST PERFORMANCE TO IMPROVE SHOW. AGAIN, MANAGEMENT EXPANDED HALL CAPACITY FROM 6,000 TO 6,300 PLACES/PERFORMANCE. HALL SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR THIS TYPE PERFORMANCE WHILE ICE DOWN AS IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT RELATE TO AUDIENCE. CLARK SHOW WORKED HARD TO OVERCOME THIS.

C. ROSSIYA HALL IN MOSCOW, WHILE BEST EQUIPPED, PROVIDED LEAST IMAGINATIVE LIGHTING AND WORST SOUND. GROUP DECIDED TO USE OWN SOUND SYSTEM BUT WAS OCCASIONALLY GIVEN INADEQUATE POWER OR TOO MUCH AUXILIARY AMPLIFICATION FROM HALL'S SYSTEM MAKING PERFORMANCE UNEVEN. GROUP'S SOUND TECHNICIAN BELIEVED HALL'S TECHNICIAN ACTIVELY SABOTAGED SOUND QUALITY. EMBOFF'S EXPERIENCE WITH HALL SUGGESTS THIS A POSSIBILITY AS HALL MANAGEMENT HAS EXPRESSED STRONG PREFERENCE UTILIZATION ITS OWN AMPLIFICATION SYSTEM AND RECOUNTED HOW OTHER GROUPS HAVE TRIED TO USE OTHER EQUIPMENT AND FAILED. HALL CAPACITY WAS ABOUT 3,500.

9. HEALTH: CLARK ARRIVED ILL AND WAS RUSHED THROUGH CUSTOMS TO SEE EMB DOCTOR WHO DIAGNOSED INTESTINAL VIRUS AND PRESCRIBED AND OVERNIGHT STAY IN MOSCOW WHILE GROUP TRAVELED ON TO RIGA. HE TRAVELED FOLLOWING DAY AND PERFORMED IN PREMIERE. ENTIRE GROUP WAS TIRED FROM THREE-WEEK LAS VEGAS ENGAGEMENT AND SUSCEPTIBLE TO COLDS. ONE OF "SUGAH" MISSED THRE PERFORMANCES IN MOSCOW AS RESULT OF HEART ABERRATION CAUSED BY
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NERVOUS TENSION. WHERE POSSIBLE, GROUPS SHOULD ARRIVE IN MORE RESTED STATE, PARTICULARLY DURING GRUELING WINTER MONTHS.

10. GOSKONSERT SUPPORT: GOSKONSERT ASSISTANCE IN RECTIFYING DIFFICULTIES CREATED BY PAN AM WAS FIRST CLASS AS WAS ITS TREATMENT OF THE GROUP THROUGHOUT THE TOUR. PUCHKIN (SEE ABOVE) PROVIDED TALENTED ASSISTANCE IN OVERCOMING LANGUAGE BARRIER. SINGLE BAD GOSKONSERT DEVELOPMENT INVOLVED TV TAPING OF CONCERT (SEPTTEL).

11. STATE DEPT. ESCORT: JOHN PARKER PROVED TO BE RESPONSIBLE, RESOURCEFUL, INTELLIGENT, GOOD HUMORED--AN OUTSTANDING CHOICE BY DEPT. AS ESCORT. POST ENTHUSIASTICALLY WELCOMES HIS FUTURE ASSIGNMENT AS ESCORT.

12. OVERAL EVALUATION: CLARK AND MEMBERS OF HIS SHOW IMPRESSED SOVIET AUDIENCES WITH THEIR CREATIVITY AND HIGH MUSICAL SKILL. THEY DEMONSTRATED, THROUGH THEIR VIVIDLY HUMAN ACT WHICH WAS TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY BY SOVIETS, THE VIGOR AND EXCITEMENT OF AMERICAN CULTURE. WARM AND ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE OF GROUP TO ITS AUDIENCES AND OFF-STAGE CONTACTS BROUGHT FORTH SINCERE EXPRESSIONS OF DESIRE FOR BETTER RELATIONS AND MUCH CLOSER HUMAN CONTACTS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE MUSIC WAS EXCITING, THE GROUP TALENTED AND LOVEABLE. THIS PAG WAS AN EXCELLENT PROPONENT OF A TYPE OF MUSIC AS OLD AND AMERICAN AS JAZZ.
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